

We have passed the minimum wage bill, which is now law. We passed a balanced budget, which also has in it the restoration of pay as you go. We passed a continuing resolution. Remember, when we came here, there had been no funding preparations made for after February 1, so we had to do that, and we did. We worked on approving the appointment of U.S. attorneys. That passed on a bipartisan basis.

We worked to make sure there was equipment for Guard and Reserves that was appropriate for those people serving in Iraq. We worked hard to push Mine Resistant Ambush Protected vehicles, and now they are in theatre. We passed health care legislation for the veterans, and we provided military medicine that was over and above what the President requested.

We basically full funded the Katrina disaster, which was something that was long overdue. We provided health insurance for children. And I would say, without question, this was as much pushed by Republicans as Democrats—the \$600 million that will fund many programs in an adequate fashion until the 1st of October, which would not have been the case otherwise.

We provided \$1 billion for homeland security, something we had been working on for a long time. This will allow the Department of Homeland Security to provide more security at our train stations and on our rails and to do some things we have not been doing at airports.

For 3 years, we have been trying to get agriculture disaster relief passed. We were able to do that. Again, clearly bipartisan. Western wildfire relief is important. For example, in the State of Nevada, more than a million acres have burned.

We have had many hearings dealing with the conduct of the war. We have had only two things that have been vetoed. One was the emergency supplemental with timelines, and the other is—I don't know if the President has vetoed it yet. I didn't check with my staff before I came here. But I know we sent the President the stem cell bill yesterday, and I am told he is going to veto that.

We have a number of things that are in progress. We expect to be able to do the ethics and lobbying reform in the near future, hopefully within a matter of the next week or 10 days.

The 9/11 Commission recommendations, Senators LIEBERMAN and COLLINS have been working hard on that with their House counterparts. That is basically done. We have security at the U.S. courts. I have spoken to the House yesterday and they are going to move on that, so that can be completed with the conference because we passed it over here.

Reauthorization of FDA, we have done that here. I think that should be able to be conferenced quite soon.

WRDA, Senators BOXER and INHOFE are working on that very hard. We expect that conference to take place

without a lot of heartburn. And the competitiveness legislation. I spoke with the Speaker last evening. They have a bill they have already passed. We have passed one. We should be able to do that—again, clearly a bipartisan bill.

We have a number of things we tried to move on and were unable to do so because procedurally we couldn't get to them, even though we tried. One was to change the Medicare prescription drug law on negotiation and allow Medicare to do that. We wanted to do intelligence authorization. We were prevented from being able to get it on the floor because of a filibuster. Immigration reform is a work in progress. Perhaps in the next few days we will have a pathway to get that completed.

I have had some good conversations this morning with both Democrats and Republicans on that issue, and the Republican leader and I hope we can sit down and talk about that when he has a proposal he can give. I understand that could come as early as today or tomorrow.

We have on the Senate Floor now an energy bill—again, totally bipartisan. Everything that is in the bill that is on the Senate Floor has been bipartisan. So I hope we can move forward on that and complete that.

As I indicated, we need to start, before we leave here, the Defense authorization bill. I hope we can do that.

So we have done a lot. A lot of times you hear little bits and pieces of what we have done. I have not covered everything, but I have touched on most everything we have been able to do this year, and I think it is something that we should feel good about.

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, will the majority leader yield for a moment?

Mr. REID. I am happy to yield.

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I would like to thank our majority leader for his effort. He read a list in the last few moments that goes through quite quickly a whole list of things that have required an extraordinary amount of effort to be able to accomplish, and I wish to thank him personally.

This has not been an easy 6 months. I think our friends on the other side of the aisle have wished to slow things down, with procedural motions over and over again, to even go to a bill, and to see the leader's patience and determination and perseverance has been extraordinary.

I am very proud of the fact, when we compare our first 6 months to the 6 months in previous Congresses, that this gentleman has been a task master. He has kept his nose to the grindstone and has kept us focused on things that matter to the American people, from the war in Iraq and bringing that to the forefront, to having hearings where we have asked for accountability and attempted to change the direction on the war, as well as to things we in Michigan are desperately caring about

every day, in terms of our economy and our quality of life.

So I wish to thank the leader personally for all he has done and will continue to do. I know that with all of us working together, we are changing the direction of this Congress and working very hard to address the things that people care about every day.

#### RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Republican leader is recognized.

#### ENERGY

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, the Senate takes up energy today. Let me say at the outset the proposed bill has some good provisions and it has some troubling ones. What most concerns Republicans are the issues it doesn't address at all.

Everyone agrees energy independence is a top priority. America imports nearly 60 percent of its oil, much of it from dangerous and unstable countries that do not have our best interests at heart. Yet the bill on the floor does nothing to increase domestic production of oil and gas—absolutely nothing. If energy independence is truly a priority, we will increase domestic production of oil and gas, period.

Increasing production at home will lead to greater independence and it will lead to lower gas prices. The average price of gas has gone from \$2.20 to \$3.15 a gallon since the Democrats took over the Senate. It is in danger of going up even more if this bill is not amended. We know gas prices go up as supply goes down. Yet this bill, as written, does nothing either to increase domestic supply or refinery capacity and, thus, drive down gas prices.

Liberals in Congress have historically blocked both these efforts. But with the price of gas where it is, this annual gift to the environmental lobby is a luxury we can no longer afford. If we are serious about gas prices, we will increase both domestic production and refining capacity. This bill, as written, does nothing to address either; therefore, nothing to lower gas prices.

Republicans will be offering amendments that will fill the gaps and give Members a chance to do something about energy independence and out-of-control gas prices. Yesterday, Senator INHOFE offered an amendment to increase refinery capacity, and Republicans will soon have a chance to vote on his proposal.

I also appreciate Senator BUNNING's hard work on coal to liquids, which is poised to become a major industry in Kentucky. This technology is one of the more promising alternative fuels we know of. Its addition to the market is one more way Republicans are proposing to lower fuel prices.

We will also debate fuel economy standards, and that is appropriate. We